

It was some hours later that Mark himself stood leaning against a pillar in the veranda, looking with grave interest at the girl who was beside him. They had been in the evening, and he had been making the most of the few moments which he had given them. They were old friends, and more than that, perhaps; but to-night their manner was constrained, nervous, excitable. The strangeness of it moved Macdonald more than any mere coldness would have done. He loved her—that he knew beyond question—but he could scarcely have told what urged him to tell her so just at that moment.

"You think you do, Captain Macdonald, but you do not know me," said Constance in a hard strained voice.

"Think? Not know you? Did I not know you well enough before?"

"Yes, I think I have changed."

"No, never nearer."

"You cannot have—no, you cannot have; I will not believe it. I know I am not good enough," he urged.

"You are like a saint, and I'm not good for much; but things used to give one a sort of hope—"

"Good enough!" she broke in with a sob in her throat; "it is I who am not good enough. I tell you, you do not know me."

"I would not believe you against yourself. I do know you. I love you. How can I prove it?"

She shook him from her grasp.

There was one way, and she was to put him to the test—prove him and in the process prove to herself the love she valued above everything on earth. No wonder she winced from his touch on her hand. But, try as she might to answer, no word would come to her relief.

"Try me," he said again. "You have learnt to doubt me, I do not know what is in your mind; but if you will give me a chance, tell me what I have done or not done, or give me something to do that I may show you there is nothing in the world I would not do for your sake."

"Nothing?" The word came as though forced from her.

"Nothing. Anything that you would ask would be something worth doing. Try me, and give me the chance. There is something, or you would not ask like this. You used not to be afraid of asking a friend to help you. What is it? Have you had trouble of any sort?"

Then he added, with a generosity which was characteristic of the man:

"If it is what I have said to-night which makes you hesitate—forget it. Let us be only friends. I will ask for no answer. But, as just now, as of friendship, is there anything I can do?"

Tears sprang to her eyes. She had to clench her hands to prevent herself crying out.

"Captain Macdonald," she answered, "no mere friend would do this thing. Suppose I were to ask you to give the life to your whole life to do which no honourable man would take into consideration for a moment—would you do it?"

"You, of all men?"

"This thing is impossible," he replied; but he paled before the haunting anxiety of her look.

"You would not ask it—of all women?"

"But I, of all women, do ask it," she cried.

"It is I who give you this test. No one will know but you and me. Men will never believe that you would do such a thing, and you will know that you did it for me—that it was my doing, not yours. The shame of it will only be mine. Of no one else could I ask it. No one but you can help me—that is the hard part—and you only if you love me well enough to do it and bide me for it afterwards."

"I love you," he said. "I shall love you always. Tell me this thing."

He was calm—too calm. Her heart almost failed, but she had given her promise and must go through with it.

"You ride Daylight to-morrow?"

"You know I do," was the wondering reply.

"In your hand is the race is certain."

"Probably. But why change the subject like this. Give me my test, Constance."

"I give it," said Constance breathlessly. "It is—it is—Captain Macdonald, Daylight must not win the Cup!"

"Not win?"

Did the truth dawn on him then? He stood straight and stern before her, and the proud girl felt humbled to the dust.

"Only you can manage it. You have been so long away, they would say he had forgotten you—that his temper had grown worse. They would never suspect you."

Such persuasion used to him—to Mark Macdonald—whose character for honesty was a household word. She laughed at herself—a mirthless laugh.

"You need not go on," said Mark. "It does not much matter what people think. Have you thought what it means? And do you truly ask me to do this as a proof that I loved you, thinking you—God only knows what I thought you!"

"I must—I must. You promised to refuse me nothing. I ask nothing else."

"And afterwards?"

"Afterwards you will lose the sight of me. We need never meet. I will go quite away."

"Constance, I do not do this for nothing, no reward? Am I to give up everything and be farther from you than ever?"

She trembled. Was it with joy or pain?

"You mean—"

"Step!" he cried. "Tell me, first, who is it you are doing this for?"

"It is for myself—"

"It is not. It cannot be. You would not save yourself this way!"

So he trusted her, after all. Not till then did her self-command fail. She could have borne his hate, but this confidence broke her down.

Nevertheless he could not guess at her secret. She would not betray it even to him.

Thursday came and in due course came the start for the great race. Eagerly was each competitor scanned by the anxious spectators. Though it was unanimously decided that it was Daylight's race, there was a lingering hope in many breasts that some mischance might befall the favourite and give one of the others a look-in.

Constance Vane and her sister, young Mrs. Trevor, stood side by side. The latter's breath came and went in short, uneasy gasps, and the colour left her face like little flame.

"If Geoffrey knew she whispered. "Oh Constance dearest you have fared me!"

The girl looked down sadly at the little flame, which was all she had to love in the world, with the exception of the man who was disconcerting himself for her sake.

"It would have been better to tell him, Nial. I am sure of it."

"No, no! He would never have forgiven me. And if Geoffrey knew he would never know."

Constance sighed, and just then Mark Macdonald rode Daylight to the course. Their eyes met, but neither flinched now. Mrs. Trevor wondered at the look in Mark's face. Only Constance knew what it meant.

The start! No! Daylight was away before time, and brought back chaffing and angry. Again!

"Hello! Mark's hand has lost its cunning."

felt it as the touch of a stranger. No stranger would he brook, and forthwith he proceeded to do so in his own way. He picked up Mark's arm and after another pass him. The Champion leading, with an easy swing, and little Graceless waiting behind. Thoughts of the faith placed in him by the regiment, of the hopes centred in him by the old "Blazers," of his own inward disgrace, stung him like the strokes of a lash. His love for Constance rose to torture him afresh. How could she? He looked up. There she stood, so white and still, with her eyes strained to meet his. And there was Mrs. Trevor! Yes, it must be so—this sister whom she so loved. Poor Constance! What it must have cost her to ask this thing, Stop! Was it fair to her to do it? Should he save her in spite of herself? Such thoughts chased each other through his mind in the interval of a few breathless seconds. Then he turned his whole attention to Daylight, who was now struggling to get away with him. Oh, the long, delicious stride! How well he knew it! It had never failed him; should he fall the good horse? Who shall tell what turns the scale for good or evil? One hasty glance—was it fancy that Constance pointed to the winning post?

"The Blazers" looked on in dismay.

"All over now; he couldn't pick 'em up."

"Not sure; but wasn't that evident."

"Champion or Graceless? Tony, you're in luck."

"Hold on there! Colonel, I say! Mark's got hold of him at last."

All eyes turned. It was true. Daylight was skimming the ground as though he could not feel it. A second more, and he was alongside Fastime, who was already labouring sadly. Champion and Graceless led the field by a couple of lengths and were full of going. Daylight had recognised the once well-known head, and there was no temper now. Strong and even his stride, gaining ever so little, the white foam flecking his glossy coat, the favourite meant winning at last.

"Daylight or nothing!" cried the Colonel, his bronzed face alight with honest pleasure. Mark's the man!—always to be trusted—never knew him fail!

A thinking rose to the lips of Constance Vane. Better anything than that he should have done the thing she had asked.

"Nial," she whispered, "if he wins you must tell Geoffrey, and he will settle all the money matters. I am sure, dear, you will be happier when you and he have had a complete understanding."

And little Mrs. Trevor promised.

On came the field at a headlong pace. The Champion's jockey saw that his only chance was to keep the lead, and trust to his mount having wind enough to last the end. Fastime was dead-beat; but Graceless seemed equal to any distance, and Mark knew it must be a close thing. Thunder of hoofs, roar of voices—and he knew that his brother officers were watching every movement. Now that the die was cast all thoughts fled. He must get past the post first, that was his only idea. All other sensations were lost in the exhilarating excitement of the moment.

"Graceless! Graceless!"

"Don't punish him, Jim."

"Champion's giving way. Come on, Mark!"

The Champion's breath began to fail; but they were only a few lengths from home. No good; whip and spur won't do it now. It became a match. Graceless straining every nerve, with nostrils wide distended, and Daylight at his heels.

"Good horse! good horse!" shouted the Colonel. "Daylight for ever!"

With a grand spurt the favourite forged ahead gallily, and all was over.

"I couldn't do it," said Mark, searching her face anxiously when at length they were left together.

"Thank God for it!" was her reply. On the impulse of the moment she held out both hands to him.

"I could never have forgiven myself," she said, with shining eyes. And what more they said need scarcely be written. But when Constance heard the result of her sister's confession to Mr. Trevor, her cup of happiness was filled to the brim; and only then did Mark hear something of the cause which had given him the sharpest struggle he had ever known.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

The leading export of New York was peltry. Imprisonment for debt was a common practice. Every gentleman wore a queue and powdered his hair.

Virginia contained a fifth of the whole population of the country.

Two stage coaches bore all the travel between New York and Boston.

A gentleman bowing to a lady always scraped one foot on the ground.

A day labourer considered himself well paid with two shillings a day.

Almost all the furniture was imported in America from England.

Stoves were unknown; all cooking was done before an open fire place.

There was only one hat factory in America, and that made cocked hats.

Vaccination had not become popular, and small-pox was an every-day disease.

All the population of a village assembled at the inn on "post day" to hear the news.

There were no pianos; ladders of musical talent played on the spinnet or harpsichord.

In most families no cooking was done on Sunday; a cold Sunday dinner was the rule.

The United States contained fewer people than now live in New York and its suburbs.

Women's dresses were puffed out with hoops and stood out two or three feet on each side.

Gloves were not worn either for style or for comfort. Mittens of yarn were worn in winter.

The doctor carried his own medicines and himself mixed the enormous doses then given.

Mails travelled at the rate of thirty or forty miles a day in summer, and half that rate in winter.

Postage was paid in money, and the amount was indorsed on the outside of the letter by the Postmaster.

There were no manufacturers in America, and every household raised her own flax and made her own linen.

Boys attended the district school for two or three months in the winter; the master "boarded round" among his patrons.

Private houses were lighted with tallow candles; public halls and the salons of the wealthy with candles of wax.

There were less than 300 street lamps in New York, and these were not lighted on wet nights because nobody was then abroad.

There were no cotton manufacturers in New England or anywhere else, because the fibre could not be separated from the seed.

The cities of America had no sidewalks. Step-ladders were laid in muddy places, and a class of postmen kept the horsemen from running over pedestrians.

Dutch was as much spoken in New York as English; German was the sole language of many settlements in Pennsylvania; Scandinavian was spoken all along the Delaware river; Gaelic in the highlands of North Carolina, and French in South Carolina.—*John Demarest.*

BITS OF INFORMATION.

Male mosquitoes do not bite. Uncle Sam's navy is 100 years old. The electric light was discovered in 809. The first lucifer match was made in 1829. Only 9 per cent. of cases of amputation are fatal.

Eight cubic feet of snow produce one cubic foot of water. A woman's hair is said to weigh on the average 14 ounces.

Three out of every 135 English-speaking people have red hair.

The lifting power of the heart is equal to five tons one foot an hour.

An Aegean piece of the year 700 B.C. is the oldest coin in the world.

Children, plants and animals grow more rapidly during the night.

A spider's eyes are not in his head, but in the upper part of the thorax.

The Osage tribe of Indians is the richest individuals in the world.

The most ancient book mentioned is said to be the "Book of Enoch."

Congress adopted the Stars and Stripes as the national flag on June 14, 1777.

When the war of the jury in Germany stands 6 to 6 the prisoner is acquitted.

Persons of weak intellect are apt to succumb to acute diseases of every kind.

Almost five-eighths of the steamers in the world are under the British flag.

The longest single arch in a stone bridge is 984 feet, over the Rislio at Venice.

Texas is big enough to afford standing room for the population of the entire globe.

One of the coldest things about the Gulf Stream is that no whales are found in it.

The total number of electors in this country, including women entitled to vote, is 13,500.

The planet of Neptune has the longest year, consisting of more than 60,000 of our days.

Q is the letter O with a tail. Hence its name, which comes from the French queue, a tail.

The last census gives the number of males of voting age in the United States as 16,946,311.

The diamond has been found on all continents and in almost every country in the world.

No fewer than 1,700 ancient manuscript copies of the New Testament in whole or in part exist.

Constantinople has a population of 1,000,000 people, but last year only 300,000 arrests were made.

At a depth of more than four miles the ocean is without life, without vegetation and without light.

The earth's lowest body of water is in the Caspian Sea, which has been sinking for centuries.

The hop-vine insect is able to produce 6,000,000 young during its life of a month or six weeks.

The British Museum has no less than 700 theological books written concerning the creation of the world.

Westminster Bridge, built in 1750, was the first in which the foundations were laid by the aid of calissons.

Lower California is the longest of North American peninsulas, being 800 miles long and 145 miles wide.

Photographers claim that they can take a picture of a rifle ball travelling at a speed of 3,000 feet per second.

In the United States, during the last four years only one murderer in every fifteen has been punished for crime.

A Spanish musician has devised a system of musical notation by which the sharp-and-flat system is done away with.

In order to protect an invention all over the world no less than sixty-four patents are required at a cost of about \$17,500.

The wedding ring is worn on the left hand because, in symbolism, the right hand is superior, the left obedient.

Three-fourths of the earth's surface cannot be cultivated on account of mountain ranges, deserts, swamps and barren ground.

The Chan-Santa-Cruz Indians in Yucatan have never been conquered. No white has ever seen their city, which is defended by a swamp.

Until the discovery of the gold mines in California, Russia was the greatest gold-producing country, mining about \$13,000,000 a year.

The two highest inhabited spots on earth are Arevichy and Mucapata, mining camps in the Andes. The former has an elevation of 17,950 feet.

The opera is just 300 years old. Italy is its home. The first opera was *Dayna*, text by Riteucci and music by Peri. It was first produced in 1600 in Florence under the title, *Opera in Musica in Style Representative*.

Opera in Musica in Style Representative. It is computed that the death rate of the world is sixty-seven a minute and the birth rate seventy a minute and this seemingly light percentage of gains is sufficient to give a net increase of population each year of about 1,200,000 souls.

SOMETHING ABOUT TWO BOYS.

"The most pathetic incident of my childhood is this: My mother had been very ill for several weeks, and the doctor solemnly announced that she could not live more than two or three days longer at most. This night my mother roused me from sleep and took me out of my little bed to bid her a last good-bye. I shall never forget the scene, which was new and awful to me. People were weeping all round the room, the air of which was heavy with the odour of ointments and lamps, and rooking with the fumes of drugs. My mother knew and kissed me, and then they took me back to my bed. But that night I was never to see her again. She died at midnight, and I was left alone in the world. I shall never forget the scene, which was new and awful to me. People were weeping all round the room, the air of which was heavy with the odour of ointments and lamps, and rooking with the fumes of drugs. My mother knew and kissed me, and then they took me back to my bed. But that night I was never to see her again. 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